Adverse effect of import of arecanut

*52. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of arecanut imported by the country during the last three years from Bangladesh, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Myanmar, year-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that import of arecanut from these countries has resulted in fall in the prices of arecanut hitting the arecanut growers of Karnataka adversely;

(c) whether Central Government propose to stop the import of arecanut in order to safeguard the interests of arecanut growers of Karnataka;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps taken to safeguard the interests of arecanut growers of Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) The country-wise import of arecanut during the last three years is given as under:—

Country	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05 (Provisional)
Bangladesh	7219.46	6753.08	2386.90
Thailand	1010.76	696.77	1798.46
Sri Lanka	783.68	181.66	437.80
Myanmar	5010.81	3223.21	2249.45
TOTAL	14024.71	10854.72	6872.61

(b) There is generally a downward trend in prices of arecanut of different varieties during the last few years. But this trend cannot be linked to imports since imports constitute only 3 to 5% of total domestic production in recent years. It is notwworthy that quantum of imports has actually been decreasing.

(c) to (f) The Government is closely monitoring the imports and is committed to ensure through tariff and other measures that imports do not cause injury to the domestic farmers.

Government of India constituted an Expert Committee, under the Chairmanship of Dr. P. Rethinam, Former Chairman, Coconut Development Board. Considering the present trend of fall in prices, as well as the problems of arecanut farmers, as represented by various organizations, Government of India raised the import duty of arecanut from 35% to 100% to restrict imports. Further, the Finance Ministry has also issued instructions to the Customs Officials to prevent the illegal entry of arecanut into the country.

Revival of Separatist/Terrorist Groups

†*53. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have received the information regarding terrorist and separatist groups becoming active again after uniting together in several States recently;

(b) if so, the names of these terrorist oganizations and the States where activities of these organizations have spread so far, and

(c) the number of violent incidents carried out by these terrorist groups by the end of June, 2005 in those States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) and (b) Recent available inputs suggest that terrorist outfits particularly Lashkher-e-Toiba (LeT) intend to carry out disruptive and subversive activities besides J&K, in various parts of the counry by attacking sensitive/vital installations, VIPs, religious places, places of national importance and important economic infrastructure. These are also reports to indicate that Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) is attempting to revive militancy in Punjab. The terrorist groups continue in indulge in violent activities in some of the North-Eastern States.

(c) Apart from twin bomb blasts in Cinema Halls in Delhi on May 22, 2005 and a terrorist attack in Ayodhya on July 5, 2005, 981 violent

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.